

A SERMON

5.

ON

American Slavery;

PREACHED IN NEW HUDSON, MICH.

JUNE 18, 1854.

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MESSRS. COGGESHALL, CLARK, GARDNER, KIMMIS AND OLDS:—

GENTLEMEN:

Agreeably to your request I present you the Sermon preached in New Hudson, on the 18th inst. for publication; with the hope that it may subserve the cause of humanity and truth, in the especial crisis of the present time.

L. LOVEWELL.

A Sermon on American Slavery.

HEBREWS 13: 3. *Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.*

My hearers: As it is my intention to preach a sermon from the text, and according to the text, your especial attention is called to the emphatic language here used; as 'Bound with them,' as 'being yourselves also in the body.' There is a fearful tendency among the mass of hearers in this nominally christian land, and even in the very churches themselves, to make the word of God of none effect, by presuming on the almost deistical idea, that the expressions used in the sacred scriptures have less meaning than the language itself would appear to convey. How few appreciate such declarations as these: 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,' 'whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, *do ye* even so to them,' 'forgive *our* debts as *we* forgive *our* debtors,' and especially the much neglected subject spoken of in the text. When we read such tests of christian character as were employed by holy men of old; That 'they were voice for the dumb,' 'eyes for the blind;' that they stood ready 'to pluck the victim out of the grasp of the spoiler,' 'and the cause they knew not they searched out,' we may well exclaim in the language of the venerable Doddridge, 'Blessed Lord! either these are not thy words or we are not thy children!'

This neglect of the enslaved has already been carried to such extent in our own land, as to affect materially the vital doctrines of true christianity. When the very summary of true Godliness, as preached in Micah 6, 8, "as what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God," is urged upon the consideration of a professedly christian congregation; we hear the most unequivocal sounds of dislike in many instances, joined with the strange request, they want no such preaching, but THE GOSPEL. To meet their anxiety on this point, we turn to the gospel of the Son of God, and at the commencement of Christ's mission, we find it declared that the especial object of his gospel

and mission, was 'to heal the broken hearted,' 'to preach deliverance to the captives,' 'and to set at liberty them that are bruised;' Luke 4, 18th. We pass to the closing up of the Apostolic teachings, and there we find the only Bible definition of pure religion to be, beside a life unspotted from the world, a true regard to the wants of the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and well we may ask, who are more truly widows and fatherless indeed, than those over whose domestic relations broods the monster of American slavery? Sundering at any moment of its option, every endearing relation, every affectionate tie that God has ordained and formed in every breast for the holiest and *best of purposes*.

What American Slavery is, is a subject concerning which but few reading people require information, and all its dreadful reality can be learned from a single instance of the 'main' law of the slave code. "They shall be deemed to all intents and purposes, chattels personal of their owners." If any thing more can be wanted to utterly brutalize a large portion of the human race, and those situated in the very heart, and around the capital of a nation calling itself not only *republican* but *christian*, the details of this dreadful system will certainly accomplish it. They can in no case testify of the abuse received from their oppressors. They are most effectually detained from every opportunity of learning, even to the reading of the sacred scriptures. For certain crimes, it is expressly ordained by those dreadful statutes, that 'the slave shall be put to death without benefit of clergy.' And though the query might naturally arise, of what benefit a clergy, tolerating such a system, could be to a dying sinner, yet we discern the intent to follow the poor victim with eternal torments after all he has endured in this life. Brutalized by his bonds, by crushing out his very manhood, denied the light of the sacred scriptures, compelled to trifle with the command of God in relation to all the sacredness of the marriage covenant, as well as that relating to the control of his own children; made to understand that if he does the duties of a christian, it only increases his value as property, while the slave of a Mahomedan would be made by his conversion a freeman, and entitled to all the privileges of a common citizenship; if, under all these crime-producing circumstances, he commits an offence of much magnitude, must not only be hurried out of existence, but that under circumstances designed to secure his eternal misery! This is but a very faint picture of this system of slavery, which not only exists already in fifteen States of this Union, but is especially at the present time putting forth the most gigantic efforts to make the system entirely national, and unless speedily arrested by the united effort of a free people, will soon accomplish its dreadful, its damning work! And can it be that christians will refuse to give heed to this subject? To consider well the words of our text; to place your dearest friends, in imagination—yea, your *very souls* in the condition of the enslaved millions of our land, and enquire, Lord wilt thou not arouse the world to contemplate the magnitude

of our wrongs? Brethren! when you once possess such a mind, a way will be open for your successful efforts.

The standard to which your minds are urged, as we proceed with this subject, my hearers, is simply that of the text—‘as bound with them;’ ‘as being yourselves also in the body,’ that is, liable to the same adversity, which perfectly coincides with the golden rule of our Lord, ‘Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.’ As we wish to use all possible candor with a subject of this nature, we propose to consider fairly and impartially the more frequent objections urged against the discussion of these principles.

First. ‘There is no need of so much being said; if we must remember them let it be in thought, not in word.’ Would you have administered ‘consolation’ like this to the afflicted wife of Captain Riley, while her husband was a slave in Barbary? ‘No necessity for talking over the subject, you can think of your husband if you choose.’ Would not her truthful, her indignant reply have been, in the language of inspiration, ‘Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh?’ Will christians, after all that has been said for the last twenty years, about the system of caste, as obtaining in Hindoostan, in a heathen community, engraft its worst features on their own articles of faith, and make christianity a mere religion of caste? Forbid it heaven, and save the name of Jesus from such reproach! But the objector will say, (for the religion of our land has fallen so near the level of that of the Jewish church eighteen centuries ago)—‘if aught must be said to remember the bondman, let it be on the week time and not on the Sabbath day.’ How much that language sounds like the cry raised, even against the Lord of the Sabbath, whenever he attempted to carry out the designs of his own gospel: ‘Are there not days enough in which men may come and be healed without profaning the Sabbath day?’ And the same rebuke as then administered would be appropriate now. Which of you would not strive to save even a sheep on that day, and is not the welfare of an immortal being of more consequence than that of a sheep? We should surely think so. From the estimate even of a Southern market, aside from the most solemn reflection, that *one* is thy fellow man, and beside him thou must stand in judgment, and perchance be the very one to whom thy Lord will refer, when the divine voice breaks on thy trembling ear: ‘As ye did it not to one of the least, ye did it not unto me.’ Think thou proud Pharisee, who hast dared to surname thyself after Christ, that He is not ashamed to look after the *least* of the human family, and appointed even such to be his representatives here below! But this objection will be carried still farther: ‘That the question of slavery involves political principles, and is therefore utterly taken out of the hands of the ministry, and totally detained from all discussion on the Sabbath day. Whence was the doctrine derived that ministers of the gospel, ambassadors of the Lord of hosts, have nothing to do with questions of a political nature? In the early struggles of the

church, there was a time when, throughout the entire Roman Empire, as in some countries now, idolatry was a political institution, sustained by statute laws ; and then in a few centuries, papacy was a creature of law, and were the reformers right in attacking these fountains of sin, when they were thus truly political questions ? According to this version of christianity, we ought to be way back in the dense paganism of the old Roman Empire, and the fifty millions of martyrs whose blood was poured out like water, in what they considered the cause of truth, only punished according to their deserts for meddling with the affairs of State ! If ‘all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable,’ what means that plain and positive direction given on this subject in Ex. 18, 21 ? But, says the objector, ‘in the New Testament we are directed to pray for our rulers, and nothing is said about appointing good men for such purposes.’ Let us for one moment examine the weight and substance of this objection. God gave the command to Israel with that appropriateness attending the divine law in every case, that is, when they were in circumstances to meet its demands. Then the people of Israel, like those of our own country, chose their own rulers. They neglected the direction of the Almighty, perhaps became too pious to listen to their religious teachers, in questions of a political nature, or perhaps what is more probable, those teachers of the laws of God became too spiritualized to discuss such sublunary affairs ; wicked men assumed the direction of the ship of State, until by their wretched administration their every interest, political and religious, was utterly wrecked and ruined. During the personal ministry of Christ, as also at the time when Paul gave his direction, to ‘pray for all in authority,’ not an office was elective by the people.’ Would Paul have perpetrated such nonsense as to talk about electing good men and true, to office ? He might as readily have preached the Tiber across the Bosphorus, to water the plains of Syria, as to have talked about ‘choosing’ even any kind of men to fill an office in the Jewish nation, aside from some common priest or elder in the Sanhedrim. But how is it in our country at the present time, in reference to this subject ? We occupy the same position and the same responsibilities that Israel did when that political direction was first given. Do you, farmers, sow thistles and pray for clover ? Will you, fellow-citizens, send such political knaves to Washington, as have for some time past been multiplying on our hands, because, forsooth, they are of our own party name, and prostitute prayer for offering it on such an altar, for such a purpose, that you may have good men rule over you ? If honest, why make your party distinctions of any account ? Just let the men be prayed for that God will make them in due time speak their own peculiar Shibboleth. And how can it be worse for the gospel ministry to exhort the people to meet the divine law in reference to this subject, even on the Sabbath day, than to pray politics even into the ear of the Lord of Sabbath, as is done in almost every pulpit on every Lord’s day morning throughout the land ?

There is a fearful mockery of God in thus shuffling off on prayer what he has ordained we should strive to do, even to the utmost, ourselves. And it frequently happens that those who, through the fear of man, or by the promptings of mere selfishness, utterly neglect a practical command, are the most tiresome around the throne of Omnipotence, to do their own work for them. And such praying will open the very flood-gates of infidelity! 'Father,' said a little boy in one of the New England States, after having witnessed the turning away without relief, of a poor woman who had come to solicit a little corn for her suffering family from this rich professor of religion—this brother of the same church—'Father, if I had your big corn crib, I would answer the prayer you made this morning for the poor, if God would not!' There was the germ of infidelity already sown in that young mind, to bring forth a plentiful harvest, as after years should bring it to maturity. How does it happen that slavery, which is so justly described by that true and good man, John Wesley, as the 'sum of all villainies,' must meet with no rebuke from the sacred desks, while common sins, 'little villainies,' may be preached to the death? And how does it happen that a preached gospel must be brought down to a mere point, fit only to pick theological slivers, and the weightier matters of God's law—as justice, mercy and humility lost sight of? And has it come to this, that the Sabbath, a day designed to promote the best good of our fellow beings, to promote the general welfare of the world at large, must be used as the ponderous engine of Juggernaut to crush still lower by culpable, wicked neglect, the sufferings of those in adversity and bondage? that their woes are not worthy a christian's attention on the Sabbath day? Is this, my hearers, the remembering of "those in bonds as bound with them?" Answer it, as it must soon be answered to God himself.

Second. This brings us to the second objection, and that is one above all others we dislike to answer; an objection that of itself savors so much of the blackness of the pit, that one who has learned of Jesus must recoil from its very presentation with horror and dismay. It is no other than this, and it is raised all over this christian land, 'Does not the Bible justify slavery?' If it does, publish it not in China, tell it not in the cities and villages of the heathen, lest they laugh your missionaries to scorn as they have already begun to do, according to the testimony of the Rev. Dr. Perkins and others, so eminently qualified to judge in relation to these interests. It is discovered by sage expounders of the sacred scriptures, that people in the Old Testament dispensation, bought, (a synonymous term then,) and there used for hire, their servants, and without remembering that the crime was death, to steal—that is, to take any person into service against his will, and also at the end of every forty-nine years, there must be a full release of all thus employed; regulations that would most effectually prevent anything like slavery; that perfect despotism, a limitless oppression, was instituted by the unchangeable author of the text before us! But not

quite satisfied, these same eminent divines ransack the writings and doings of the Apostles, and lo ! what a progeny the mighty mountain of their efforts has brought forth. It is there discovered that Paul, the very Apostle who, under the inspiration of the spirit of God, penned the words of the text, sent back a fugitive into perpetual bondage. Though Paul speaks of Onesimus as Philemon's own brother, and that 'in the flesh,' a younger brother that had in an evil hour run away from the guardianship of the elder—yet all this is forgotten, and the great preacher of righteousness and humanity is put on a par with those hired blood hounds, who would sell their own sisters, yea, their own daughters, to the wholesale licentiousness of the South, if there could only be a legal opportunity to pocket the money:—

O ! Doctors ! what a light divine,
Must ever from your teachings shine !
And sure such men had ought to live,
Who largely for your welfare give,
T' endow a place for minds so high,
To study such theology !

Before we leave this part of our subject, we might well inquire why were such awful anathemas pronounced against the land of Egypt as we find recorded in the book of God, and, as we discover, are fulfilling even yet in our day? What had that kingdom, that had stood pre-eminent among the nations, whose cities with their hundred gates were worthy of the songs of Homer, what had she done, to become through all subsequent Time—the “ basest of Kingdoms ?” Inspiration answers, “ The sin of oppression !” and yet her sin—even without considering our increased facilities for light and christianity, would bear but small comparison with ours, as is manifest in the slave-codes of the two nations. We are well aware that an argument is attempted to extenuate our guilt. “ That in Egypt sinners or heathens enslaved Saints, while in our own country Saints enslave sinners.” If such be the fashionable theology of the day, we would caution you—outsiders ! to lock your granaries, for the slide is very easy to give a patent version to the text, “ thou shalt not steal,” “ unless for christians to steal from sinners.”

Third objection. “ We have nothing to do with slavery here at the North.” Here is surely an easy avoidance of divine command ! Shall we add such interlining to the words of our text in the very teeth of that declaration in Revelations, ‘ that God will add unto such the plagues written in this book.’

But how did we learn the fact that there is a North in this ‘ confederacy ?’

The great Webster in his palmiest days, before shorn of his strength by this Delilah of wickedness, was unable to find its locality on the map of our country, and finally sat down with that inquiry so full of dismay—‘ is there a North ? and echo answers where ?’ It is a favorite maxim with slave owners as with liquor dealers, ‘ Let our business alone, except to do our drudgery—the

more dirty and unpaying part of our several professions.' 'You may and must support the pauperism and crime so necessarily following the work in which we are engaged,' say the Rum Sellers. 'You may furnish jails to hold our fugitives; men (?) to hunt them for us, common soldiers for the army—while we will provide proper officers for the same, you may bear the brunt of all expenses of Government, from that of the Post Office department to that of the continued purchase of new Territory for slavery. You may have, occasionally, a national officer from the northern portion of the confederacy, providing he will solemnly pledge himself to be seven fold more the child of hell than a southern man.' This is the practical language of the slaveites of the country, and even more ominous suggestions are thrown out at the present time. 'You at the North must respect all engagements made for the benefit of the South. You must be faithful and trusty blood hounds to do our bidding,—to catch our fugitives; you will be paid, in some instances, from the treasury of the Nation, tho' its coffers are mainly supplied by your own hard-working yeomanry, yet you must be thankful for the gratuity!' Such is the language of the slaveites even now, and well may we inquire what will be the end of these wonders? We of the so-called North are almost Slaves ourselves in the esteem of those whose bidding we have so meekly done, as witness the language of a late Virginia paper, the Richmond Examiner, in which the editor, with all imaginable coolness, draws a comparison between this country and the Roman Empire at the time Rome was enslaving the world. The Southern section of this 'Republic,' to Rome proper, pre-eminently qualified to furnish officers and managers for the whole, while the Northern portions are like to the conquered states of Greece, fit only to serve, to furnish laborers, manufacturers, peddlers, &c., for our betters! and while all this is being transacted, we meekly re-echo the question of these universal taskmasters—"What have the North to do with the subject of slavery? Surely, a very grave question!

Christians! what will you do with the text before us in reference to this subject in that great day for which all days were made? Will you introduce as a plea that the constitution of your Government would not allow you to remember the bondman, the one in adversity? What is that practical exposition of the word of God, 'whether we ought to obey God or man, judge ye?' But even here there is no shadow of proof in the plea suggested. The constitution of our country does not require some fifty-nine sixtieths of the people to be mere slave catchers for the rest. The framers of that instrument were men whose minds were too much imbued with patriotism and truth to allow even the word 'slave' in that venerable instrument. It simply provides that any person *owing* service in one State and escaping to another shall not be detained. This clause is most impudently monopolized by the slave owner, and his views, of course, are sustained by the so-called national (?) government. If your laborers were truly in your debt for money receiv-

ed, and your apprentices should escape to a slave State, would this same National Government advance some forty thousand dollars for their recovery, as was recently done in Boston to carry back into irredeemable bondage, one concerning whom it was not even attempted to prove he owed any man aught? Let the slaveite have the trouble himself to catch his reasoning, thinking, immortal chattel, and then let him prove that the toil-worn victim that had served him for ten, twenty, or forty years, *owed him service*; yea, let him prove that to an intelligent jury of free men, and then let him remove his servant by his own strength and at his own cost. But you, my hearers, are to *remember* that fugitive bondman, until these things are done and proved, with the same *remembrance*, that ye would others should have unto you, and bear in mind, as "ye did it not unto him, ye did it not unto Christ."

Fourth objection. 'The agitation of this subject will injure the cause of religion'—'will prevent instead of promote revivals, will stop conversions, and hinder the salvation of souls.' Grave and serious charges, truly! not only against the Abolitionists in general, but the author of the Bible more particularly and especially. To do what is purposed in the text, will prevent the work of Righteousness! Surely of such it may be said, 'they are wiser than the Great Teacher himself, and better know the Lord, for the Holy Ghost, speaking expressly on this subject, declares in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, after showing that the intention of the Almighty in instituting fasts, was, that the affluent might more readily sympathise with the hungry and afflicted poor; which idea reminds us that some unfeeling aristocrats in our churches might be cured of their spiritual hunkerism by going for a week on the diet prescribed by law in the slave States, (a peck of corn without any accompaniments,) and be driven throughout the livelong day and much of the night by the lash of some taskmaster. After inculcating this lesson, the spirit of God, through the Prophet, shows definitely what will produce—not mere excitement, but genuine revivals of pure religion. 'Loose the bands of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens, let the oppressed go free, break every yoke,' and then the sure result follows, not a mere galvanic excitement, to leave christianity more dead than before, but a work as permanent as glorious; for, saith the Lord, 'thy light shall rise in obscurity; thou shalt be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters fail not; and they that be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in!'

Such is the language of inspiration, such are the results as portrayed by the Holy Ghost of observing the direction of the text, and what can a firm and consistent believer in this divine word think of those professed christians, yea, ministers of Religion, who are continually talking about the danger of urging the claims of humanity as liable to injure the cause of God. We express no opinion concerning such, we leave them to answer to Him, who is declared to

be 'God manifest in the flesh'! Divinity revealed in humanity! and who has shown the world not only by his precepts, but equally so by his own example, that to elevate the lowly, to redress the wants of the most needy, constitute the essential elements of the christian character.

But this objection is carried still further, and the cry is raised that the preaching of such texts as the one before us, will 'break up the churches!' Have ministers and laymen copied this from, and made it the mere echo of the threats so often used in the halls of our National Legislature when the slaveocrats have a fresh batch of miserable Northern dough-faces to break to the traces of their Juggernaut? 'It will dissolve the Union,' say they, 'if you dare think, speak or vote for God, for humanity, for yourselves and constituents even!' 'It will break up the church,' growl out a set of men here at the North, who have worked themselves into the Zion of God, whenever a minister of Jesus shall attempt to be "*voice for the dumb*." Have no fears, my hearers, that the enormity of such sentiments can possibly be overdrawn! For men—even professed christians, to stand unmoved over a suffering, writhing world, to hear the wail that comes up from the South with every passing breeze, not only unmoved as tho' these sounds fell on the cold, leaden ear of Death, but when a christian of their community begins even in a faint degree to obey the injunction of the text—raise the cry—"you will destroy the church," it is enough to cause the more thinking part of community to inquire, 'what can be the object and design of such an institution as christianity (if such be it,) in the world? The truth, the very spirit of pure religion, is charged with the gravest possible offence of breaking up the Zion of God! Poor old ship Zion! how are the mighty liable to fall as seen in thy sad and mournful history! There was a time, when the great friend of the down-trodden and the oppressed could load thee with the utmost of immortal love, and, siezing thy helm in his own divine hands, urge thee against the most adverse currents of the world in perfect security as to thy timbers. Yea, in recent time thou couldst safely bear upon thy sails the stiff breezes of Calvinism, laden to the utmost with love, mercy, kindness, good will to men, or, with the immortal Wesley as thy commander, with his favorite motto inscribed in bold relief and floating at mast-head, "*American Slavery, the sum of all villainies*." Thou couldst endure the full pressure of Methodistical steam as thou didst plough thy fearless way up the current of sin, toward the haven of blessedness and peace, and every plank was only more secure from the pressure of love, it was permitted to bear upon its surface.' And has it come to this, that all thy greatness, thy glory, and thy strength have departed, and thou must have all this cargo of unutterable Love discharged, and must be freighted with whips, thumb-screws, and iron collars, with the wail of broken-hearted mothers and expiring babes, turned utterly out of thy course, and drifted down the current of sin, or thy very marines must jump over-

board and prefer the company of sharks and other monsters of the deep, with the plaintive cry—"The old ship Zion is going all to pieces!" Forbid it Heaven.

Fifth objection. 'The effects of emancipation would be exceedingly harmful.'

'The blacks would overrun the North.' We will dwell but a moment on the falsity of the assertion and then pass to consider its spirit. Were the slaves all emancipated they would be wanted—they would be employed for remunerative wages at the South, as somebody must do the work, and why not those already accustomed to the soil, its mode of cultivation and the climate of the country? Not only would it prevent, most effectually, all further running away of the colored people from the South, but those already in the free States and the Canadas would find it for their interest to return where they could be *men*, not things. The constant efforts made by the British West India Islands since the emancipation of the slaves in those colonies to induce the colored people of Canada to emigrate to those Islands to work for wages, sufficiently sustains the truthfulness of this reasoning, and the greatest possible good would result to those who are at present slave owners. No adage is more truthful than that 'Honesty is the best policy,' and a single glance at the comparative prosperity of the States of Virginia and New York, of Kentucky and Ohio, will afford all that is necessary to illustrate the truth of this doctrine.

But, my hearers, let us examine the spirit of this objection:—Is it the work of christian philanthropists, with this word of the Almighty for their guide in matters of faith and practice, to gather around this caldron of seething misery of unequalled wretchedness and woe, and instead of giving heed to the injunctions of the text, employ themselves in thrusting back into those burning tides the miserable victims of oppression, with cool and fiend-like calculation that they would overrun the North if allowed to escape! If this be the spirit of christianity, methinks we can almost hear the angels and archangels of God—the seraphim and cherubim, objecting to souls being redeemed from the earth and introduced into the mansions of the blessed and the society of the first born in Heaven, on the ground of inferior intelligence and appearance! Think of this thou proud Pharisee in the church of God! There may be as much moral and physical difference between thee and the mighty archangel, yea, especially between thee and the Son of the Highest, as between thy colored fellow beings and thy lordly self! It has been the opinion of some divines that the cause of the rebellion in Heaven of the Devil and his angels was the intimation that God had created man to be the sharers of his bounty and munificence! The idea is not at all improbable, that Satan upon this 'resolved on a strike.' The thought looks sufficiently 'devilish,' but not so much so as the one presented in this objection by some who have surnamed themselves after him that condescended from the highest place in the

Universe of God, to become the lowest among the lowly; that we through his poverty might become rich.

Sixth. The sixth objection that we will consider, is one frequently used, namely, 'Slavery is not so very bad; the very poor in all countries are in a much worse condition.' Immortal Henry! to what a height of fanaticism wast thou exalted when thou didst give utterance to that wide-world popular sentiment—'Give me Liberty, or give me Death!' Little didst thou imagine that there was a lower deep, a "Miltonian depth" below slavery, and that more dreaded abyss was simply—poverty! Is this the true patriotism of the land, that the toiling poor would be in a much better condition if enslaved? Try the virtue of your creed, ye who urge this objection, with that poor widow in that lone garret, or desolate shed. Take an extreme case, one that is exceedingly poor, and obliged to support her fatherless babes with the most assiduous toil—ask her if she would not prefer to put those little daughters in the shambles of irredeemable slavery?—to place her family in the situation of near four millions of human beings in this American land, over whom broods the grim features of a remorseless law; a law that is liable at any moment to sever every endearing tie! Would not her indignant response to such a suggestion be the same as that of the great statesman alluded to—"Give me Liberty or give me Death?" Let those purse-proud professors of the christian religion who allow themselves to wage this objection, instead of meekly cultivating the spirit of the text, bear in mind the truth that their own worshipped riches may possibly take to themselves wings and fly away; and do ye imagine, ye proud ones! that your happiness would be promoted after tasting the cup of poverty by quaffing the very dregs of wretchedness from the burning chalice of Slavery? 'Tis well to contemplate such an event, for you are to remember those in the adversity of bondage, as being yourselves liable to the same calamity.

'But very many of the slaves become christianized by being bro't to this country of Bibles and sanctuary privileges, and consequently slavery is quite a blessing to the African race!' Surely the great Cicero's idea that the world needed a revelation from the God of Heaven, is verified in our day! Our old Bible reads, as the text before us, and also more expressly on this subject—'He that stealeth a man shall be put to death.' 'Nay,' says the thief in the excess of his piety, 'I'll get him converted, and that will cancel all the enormity of violating the divine law!' Spirit of Protestantism! how utterly thou hast fallen! Long hast thou battled with that piercing serpent Jesuitism on this very subject, and used manfully that sword of the spirit—'Do not evil that good may come;' and has it indeed befallen thee as once it happened to the great Hector, that thou art dragged by the heels around thy own dismantled fortress, covered with dishonorable dust! And here we would observe, that if such be the state of Protestantism, well may the order of Jesuits retire from the field and leave their old antagonists to finish their

own dreadful work. What! a christian offer an excuse—a plea of mitigation, for such an institution as that of American Slavery! and on the ground, too, that some of its victims become pious under the rigorous discipline they experience! Let us apply this train of reasoning in another direction. Who has not known of some vain and thoughtless young lady, who, in an evil hour, had become engaged to some worthless, unprincipled wretch, was married, and soon called to experience all the woes of a drunkard's wife; she soon learns to look on things of earth without hope, turns her thoughts heaven-wards, and becomes hopefully pious. Now, let the professed friends of temperance get up a festival over the goodly doings of King Alcohol. 'Old Grim,' or 'Slay Good,' whatever you please to call him, has indeed formed and fashioned a soul for immortal glory! but tell it not in grogeries, lest the votaries of the intoxicating cup laugh thy temperance lecturers to scorn. But as the subject is introduced in the objection now under consideration, let us for a few moments contemplate the religious privileges of the slaves, necessarily brutalized by the system under which they are placed; so much so that our pro-slavery teachers inform us that 'they are wholly unfit for freedom, would be dangerous if emancipated,' tho' kept in the midst of a great nation; debarred as a mass from the reading of the sacred scriptures for themselves, which we as protestants have ever held to be so essential to the soul's salvation. They are instructed, if instructed at all, in just such things as may chance to suit the convenience, the interest, or caprice of their wretched and God-defying task-masters! and christians here at the North wil! talk about the 'religious advantages of Slavery!' As a better illustration of what those advantages consist, we will read an extract from a catechism laid down in the Episcopal Recorder—a staid religious journal of Charleston, S. C. It is therein recommended to planters generally for the use of their slaves. There is one significant fact connected with this, that we will note and then give the instrument itself. There was a time when we, as Calvinists, prided ourselves on our *Westminster* catechism, but now even that instrument, like every thing else, has gone over to the more tempting influences of the *South*; whether drawn by its almost omnipotent threads of cotton, or terrified by the gleams of the swords of its chivalry, we do not pretend to determine. However that may be, the *Westminster* catechism will soon be a thing unknown, all absorbed by the superior genius of the *South-minster* one before us! Yes! a *South-minster* catechism, and here it is:

- 'Who gave you a master and mistress?'
'God gave them to me.'
- 'Who says you must obey them?'
'God says I must.'
- 'What book tells you these things?'
'The Bible.' (Quere, how should the slave know that?)
- 'How does God do all his work?'
'He always does it right.'
- 'Does God love to work?' { Quere, Does not this religion point
'Yes—God is always at work.' } quite significantly at work?

“Do the angels work?”

‘Yes, they do what God tells them.’

‘What does God say about your work?’

‘He that will not work shall not eat.’

‘Did Adam and Eve have to work?’

‘Yes, they were to keep the garden.’

‘Was it hard to keep that garden?’

‘No, it was very easy.’

‘What makes the crops so hard to grow now?’

‘Sin makes it.’ (Here is quite a hint to *farmers*.)

‘Should you allow the Devil to teach you sinful things?’

‘No, I should not.’

{ Quere, How much bread
would the slaveowner get.

Now, we ask, who is there so ignorant after reading the above, as to be insensible that the spiritual interests of the slaves are duly regarded? And will not the pupils of such a system, after the physical man is worn out, be pre-eminently qualified to be sent back to Africa by the American Colonization Society, as efficient missionaries of the cross of Christ to that benighted portion of the earth?

7th. But we hasten to the seventh and last objection that we intend at the present time to consider: ‘By insisting on, and laboring for the emancipation of the slave, we would do a great injustice to the people of the South.’

In answering this objection we should be almost justified in raising the inquiry, who are the people of the South? Scattered over the fifteen slave States, there may be found a nominally free population of about five millions of persons; nearly the same in all as in the two States of New York and Massachusetts, and in the midst of these five millions may be found about two hundred and fifty thousand slave-owners, who monopolise every privilege and immunity of that portion of the confederacy. To see the degradation to which the mass of the people of those States are reduced by this accursed system, a moment’s reference to the census of 1850, in regard to the single subject of education, will satisfy the most sceptical mind as to the workings of the peculiar institution. We will present in contrast the number of the free native inhabitants over twenty years of age, in a few of the States, who cannot read and write.

In the fertile State of Georgia, 41,260; in cold, hardy Maine, 2,134; Virginia, ‘the mother of Presidents,’ 87,383; Massachusetts, ‘the land of laborers,’ 1,861.

Another feature of the slave system may be seen in the fact that it takes some eight prominent slave states to form a population of free people equal to the single state of New York, and view the difference in educational interests of these States, of the free native population over twenty years of age. The state of New York has 30,630 who cannot read and write, in some over three millions of people, while the States of Virginia, North and South Carolina, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas, containing in all about the same free population, will furnish 270,411 of this degraded class.

North Carolina and Maine are about equal in free population.

with every advantage in favor of the former, and the figures on this subject stand thus :

North Carolina, 80,083 ; Maine, 2,134.

A staunch Southern paper, the Richmond (Va.) Whig, makes the following observation in reference to this subject, in that State : " Every census exhibits a rapid and fearful increase of this mass of ignorance. In 1840, the number of the unlettered in Virginia amounted to 60,000. In 1850 it exceeded 80,000. At this rate it will not require many centuries to extinguish all knowledge of letters in the State." Now, my hearers, in view of these numerical facts, we ask, is there any truth in the objection, ' that we should do violence to the interests of the South to do our utmost in a christian manner to promote the emancipation of the slaves?' There are some five millions of free non-slaveowners, and about four millions of Slaves, making nine millions against some two hundred and fifty thousand, and of this latter number, probably not one hundred thousand are legal voters. Surely, they are the South ! in the same sense that the doctor was Linden, who, having for several years produced a dangerous miasma over a section of country numbering about two hundred families, by purposely causing a marsh in the neighborhood to be overflowed ; on being at length indicted before the grand jury of the county, indignantly declared the 'rights of the people of Linden to be invaded!'

We have now considered seven of the very strongest objections of the apologists of this horrid system against our giving heed to the injunction of the text, and what will all these objections weigh when placed in the scales of Justice and of God, with this single verse of the divine law ; and which, my hearers, will you risk yourselves to follow ?

We now proceed to briefly notice what we are to do to carry out the requirement of this portion of the Sacred Scriptures, and the motives that should urge us to the utmost diligence in the work.

First, then, what can we do? we answer, much, every way, by simply obeying the voice of the Almighty. Let the whole soul be *im-bued* with the spirit of this text—'remember them that are in bonds as bound with them.' Then there will be a *will*, and where such really exists there will be a *way*. Next make the doctrine of the divine Sovereignty of God a practical living principle; realize that you have no right on two days in the year to use your power and influence to elect men to places of trust and profit, that love covetousness more than country, liberty, and God ! and then think you can dodge the result of such wicked neglect of a practical salutary command by adding blasphemy to the previous crime—by praying you may have good men to rule over you.

'James,' said a certain farmer to his son on hearing an especial uproar among his chickens in the night, 'James, my son, did you chain up your tame fox last evening?' 'No,' replied the indolent, yet hopeful youth, 'but I said a prayer that he would not injure the chickens.' As absurd as was that plea, we are making our

selves more ridiculous in the sight of heaven if we persist in sending such heartless, soulless doughfaces to the National Legislature as we have done, lo! these years, and then expect to pray them into manhood by prayers coming from those who are neglecting a practical command of Him who must answer prayer, if it is answered at all! Elect men who are true, and will give good evidence that they will continue true to the subject of human liberty; the greatest amount of liberty certainly consistent with the constitution. That will drive Slavery back within her sectional borders and make Liberty what was designed by the framers of the constitution, truly National. Send men to Congress who will have moral courage and political honesty to unite with that Spartan band of choice spirits already there, in an immediate effort to secure the repeal of that most odious Fugitive Slave Law, as well as to undo the doings of that modern Judas, of him who has recently betrayed his country to the Slaveites for the same reward as his greater prototype of old. My hearers, were your sons and your daughters in such a bondage as that which the American slave endures; yea, were your own selves about to wear the galling chains, you would require as much as this of your fellow man; give heed then to these words, as for your own soul's salvation, Remember them in bonds as bound with them. Yes, my hearers, after having performed this practical duty to the utmost, then, and not till then, can we pray, 'lifting holy hands without wrath or doubting.' Not only can we pray directly for the bondman, but without a mockery of heaven, we can pray for the rulers we have elected.

But we pass to consider some motive that should urge us forward in this work, and that too without delay. It should be sufficient for the christian, for the believer in the word of God, to know that the Almighty requires it, that the Judge of all the earth wills it, as all must perceive *he* does, who have any regard to the scriptures before us. This motive is sufficiently clear of itself. My hearers, it is wisdom to inquire, if we are not decided to act for God and humanity in regard to this subject, 'what will we do in the end thereof?' The time draws nigh apace when we must stand in the judgment with these victims of the worst oppression the sun ever shone upon, and if still disposed to neglect, it might be well to inquire how we expect to evade the consequences of this neglect of the divine law.

But there are other considerations, and, we might add, there is every consideration pressing on us in reference to this subject and urging to the discharge of a most necessary duty. Our beloved country is fast becoming a barbarian empire compared with which, unless this tendency be speedily arrested, Russia itself will be an Eden of Love. The once famed 'Land of the Free,' will only become, in its worst sense, the 'Home of the Oppressed,' for few beside that class will find a home, or lodgment, within her broad domain.—God has not framed that great law of love, of equal rights, of the universal brotherhood of man, to be trifled with, with impunity.

'The neck of Tyrants, 'tis decreed, shall feel
The same vile chain they bind the victim's heel.'

We may receive instruction from the history of nations of the Old World. They, such as Rome, commenced the dreadful work of retrograding from the Truth and the Light, by the enslavement of a foreign people. When they were ground to the uttermost, then the poorer, laboring classes of their own subjects: and, finally, all that was left, unenslaved, was an Oligarchy, fit only for perdition! And according to the solemn warning given in Revelations 2: 5., where a people have thus apostatized from the principles of Liberty and Righteousness, the candlestick of the Lord has been removed, and experience of nearly 6000 years in the history of our world shows the remove to be final, as well as positive and sure. Concerning the oppressed it may be justly observed:

'He dug a pit as deep as Hell,
And in that pit his victim fell!
He dug the pit for patry poif
And in its depths he'll fall himself'

That we are hastening to the condition of a vast barbarian empire, might well be read in the very nature of Slavery itself—this sworn antagonist of God and man. Many good men have of late been utterly thunderstruck at the passage of that more than infernal Nebraska Douglass Bill, the tearing asunder of the most solemn compacts, the pledged faith of a christian nation, in the face of finality of finalities, in regard to this question.

Why be astonished at this? Unless this hydra of oppression is held down; yea, totally destroyed, by the strong arm of freedom, nerved by the strength of God, you may soon expect to see greater wonders than those already exhibited. The very spirit of the monster is aggression, and soon, unless arrested in its awful work of desolation, you may expect to find it covering the entire area of our country. Man! is it not of some consequence what kind of legacy you leave to your children and descendants to all coming time? Patriots! are you not responsible for the way you dispose of a patrimony bought by the blood of your veteran fathers? Christians! will not the Great Author of true religion require an account at your hand how you have regarded the interests of your fellow man; yea, especially, how you have regarded the person of Christ himself? For, look at one peculiar feature of American Slavery where it stands out separate and distinct from that of every other nation and people under the whole heaven. Go to that human-chattel auction in any of the slave States, yea, in the District of Columbia, under the very shadow of the National Flag of Freedom, and there you will not only behold the brutalizing of beauty, being recommended and held up to tempt the bids of fierce lust and gross sensuality—of young and beautiful females offered up to the licentiousness of a class of beings that can only be called the escapements of the pit; but even, if possible, a further mockery of heaven is perpetrated—to tempt still further the fierce

lightnings of Jehovah's wrath on our common country. You will there discover dollars by the tens and hundreds in extra bids on the recommend of that nameless being who, with hammer in hand, warrants the *piety* of the article on the block ! And well may we inquire if a little of the spirit and image of Jesus will enhance the value of such merchandise, what would a whole Christ bring in such a market ?

Think of this, my brethren, and to what use the christianity of our country is applied, while in Mahometan lands, the fact that the slave has embraced the religion of his master, breaks his chain and makes him free. In christian America it only enhances his value as property, because he will be more disposed to be quiet under the lash of his taskmaster. Let not little, miserable ignorance here manifest its utter imbecility by raising as an objection, that some masters treat their slaves well and they do not expose them to promiscuous sale : Be it known that according to the horrid code of Slavery, there is not a slave in all the area of the system, wherever this truly 'peculiar institution' works, but is liable by the insolvency, or the death of his owner, to be put on the auction block and sold, where and to whom God alone can tell ! And have the christian ministry nothing to do with this subject ? Can they be mute spectators of scenes like these with impunity ? Shall the true ambassador of Him who is all justice, mercy and love, personified, be terrified into silence, by hints of want and starvation, emanating from men in our congregations, and churches, that can no more comprehend the practical doctrines of a pure christianity than the Pharisees could those of Christ himself ! Forbid it Heaven ! and save thine own cause from such time-serving hands.

An appalling retrograde on the subject of human Liberty, has already begun, and, unless speedily arrested, will work the destruction not only of the interests of the State, but the irretrievable ruin of the entire Zion of God in this land. The beginning of the apostasy is supposed by many, and the idea was first hinted at by the great Webster, before he became utterly *cottonised* himself, to be the advanced price of cotton—the main staple of the slave consuming portions of the South. Think of that, ye Patriots ! The Liberties, the general welfare of this great nation hung by a thread of cotton ! Christians, behold the last hope of the world. The church of Christ in America, held by such a frail tenure over the abyss of everlasting darkness and woe ! Shade of Damocles ! If thou couldst recoil in thy very soul in view of a single life being placed in such peril, how should we feel in view of the thought that not only the millions now inhabiting Columbia, but the countless millions yet unborn ; their every interest, temporal and eternal, are all suspended over the gulf of everlasting perdition by naught save a mere thread of cotton !

OBSERVATIONS ON THE FOREGOING.

First. There is no part of christian duty so carefully guarded as that relating to our sympathies and efforts for those in bondage and adversity. Not only do we find the positive texts of scripture on this subject, the most severe denunciations, not only against the direct and immediate oppressors themselves with all their abettors and sustainers, but also against such as do not employ the utmost of their influence for the suffering victims of robbery and wrong.—‘As ye did it not unto the *least* of these, my brethren,’ says he who ‘created of one blood all nations of men,’ ‘ye did it not unto me.’

We also find every possible warning in the providence of God to cause men to respect this divine regulation. We look over the page of history, we read of such once powerful nations as Egypt, Babylon, Rome and the like; we discover their sin was that of oppression, and their ruin sure. Concerning them it can only be said ‘Troja fuit;’ they have been but are not now. In more recent time, we may look for warning and instruction to the kingdom of Spain. With every possible resource for power, and once mightily elevated, behold her present degradation! She commenced with the enslavement of the swarthy Moors, next with the Indian race, and then the unfortunate children of Africa, using with her Jesuit ministry the same plea of mitigation that is so largely employed by protestant divines in this country. ‘We will get these heathens converted to the christian faith!’ Next, as a necessary transition, we find the masses of the Castilian race themselves a degraded and oppressed people, utterly in the hands of a few designing knaves, who have managed to clothe themselves with arbitrary power. These things are written out on the page of history for instruction and admonition; and, my hearers, shall we view them unmoved and unalarmed? If so, we give certain evidence that we are already in the condition alluded to in the Pagan proverb, ‘those the gods mean to destroy are first made mad.’ And more especially in the revelation of the true God, ‘seeing they shall see and not perceive, hearing, they shall hear and not understand,’ ‘lest they should be converted and I should heal them,’ ‘because the measure of their iniquity is full.’ Let us, as the men of Ninevah, seek to escape these judgments by a timely, a speedy repentance.

As a further evidence of the regard of the great Lawgiver to this requirement, so essential to the welfare of the world, observe the directions He has given in such declarations as that of the text, ‘as bound with them;’ ‘whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for such is the Law and the Prophets.’

Now, my hearers, bring these declarations of the Almighty home to your consciences and your hearts! If you were in the very depths of a desert, and would be unwilling to receive aid and comfort from a fellow-man, because, forsooth, he happened to be of a different complexion from thyself, then thou mayest withhold thy hand from him who is ready to perish that has the misfortune to possess a darker skin than thine.

God has implanted this intense love of Liberty in the human breast, in the breast of all, where, to use the phrase of one of the meanest of American Statesmen, it has not been "crushed out" for a purpose more holy and christ-like than that of mere selfishness, that we might possess an effectual standard by which to try ourselves in reference to the great law of humanity and love. Whatsoever we would do for ourselves or have done for us by others, we are to render to those who need. A forcible illustration of this sentiment is given in the sacred scriptures in the case of Moses. He is represented as possessing the most godly character, the very pattern of meekness, yet when he found the slave-owning Egyptian trampling on a fellow being, we are informed that he slew the Egyptian. And that most venerable martyr, Stephen, when standing on the very verge of eternity, where he could even behold the throne of the highest, repeats the fact without in the least reproving the transaction. And did Moses do an act that any MAN would not do under like circumstances? Who has read the story of the torture of one of the early pioneers of the West by a party of Indians; when the poor victim raised his eyes in anguish, he discovered a former neighbor, that human-fiend of a Simon Girty before him; he naturally intreated his aid and protection. Who has not but felt that if that same Girty had possessed a human soul, he would have scattered those miscreants, rescued his friend, or perished in the attempt, instead of walking coolly and deliberately away. Just 'as ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them,' is the rule of God in relation to this subject.

2nd. The second and last reflection that we observe is this: there is practical meaning in the language of the Bible concerning Christ; 'God manifest in the flesh,' 'Divinity revealed in humanity.' Yes, THERE is the place for its manifestation—for its revelation. And where it is not *thus* manifest, it cannot be found. There can nothing be so remote from the Christianity of the Bible as this Spiritual hunkerism that so much pervades the American church at the present time. No heart to feel for the poor, if very poor—so poor as not to own their wives, their children, or even themselves! No spirit to sympathise with those in adversity, if they happen to be steeped in its very dregs! Instead of following and regarding the principle on which men will be judged, in the twenty-fifth chapter of Saint Matthew's Gospel, their prodigal language is this—'Lord, we will neglect the *least* and make it up in our devotions to the *greater*'—the very spirit pointed to by the satirical proverb of Spain—'Lord, bless the rich, the poor can beg.'

But, my hearers, when we leave the mere traditions of men, examine the truly sound doctrines of our divine relations, we find that what was appropriate concerning Christ himself is equally true concerning his teachings. 'Handle me and see,' saith the Son of God, 'for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have.' Thus when we leave the mere dogmas and visionary traditions of men—of those who do not possess moral courage sufficient to preach the gospel of the Son of God, and come to that gospel itself, we find something tangible, reliable, that meets the firmest pressure and embrace of the soul, instead of escaping as some night-phantom from our attempted grasp. Seeing we have, this sure, this reliable word by which we must be judged, let us give heed to its teachings, and partake of its spirit, for that alone will secure its full design,—Everlasting Life.

In the capacity of individuals, as members of the body politic, and communicants of the church of God, we are standing on the very Rubicon of our probation. Our next step, if made in a direction to strengthen, to sustain, and to perpetuate this horrid system, may place us in a position too far advanced to recede. The forfeiture may be taken at our hands, the fiat of the Almighty go forth: "They are joined to their idols,—let them alone!"